The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occuring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

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AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANIZE!

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TRADE UNIONISM IS A MASS MOVEMENT; THE TOTAL, NOT INDIVIDUALS, COUNT

Trade union opponents imagine they deliver a telling blow when they point to some wage earner who has risen to executive station.

"This is proof," say our opponents, "that there is room at the top: that the workers have no need for unions if they are industrious and would strive to advance."

Our opponents forget—if they ever knew—that trade unionism is intended to improve conditions on the job.

If one worker in a plant employing 100 is advanced to high position, or if the impossible happened and the 100 workers were advanced, the jobs and the poor working conditions would still remain. The necessity for trade unionism would still exist.

Trade unionism is a mass movement.

It is not intended to make success for the few possible, but to advance workers as a whole by improving the jobs.

When a building is raised, the entire structure is slowly lifted at the same time.

The trade union movement is the jack screw on which wage earners rest. Through this force the wage earners, as a mass, are steadily pushed up, up, up.

When wages are increased it means better homes, food and clothing for the worker and his family, and education for the children. When hours are shortened it means longer life, mental development, a little recreation and relief from the dull monotony of standing before a machine. These result in a higher standard of citizenship.

When sanitary conditions in the shop are secured it means less disease.

The prosperity of an individual worker is nothing in this great humanizing, uplift movement, except where that individual takes advantage of his improved position to urge the cause of justice for the mass, to plead for a larger liberty, to protest against debasing working conditions—to demand that the jobs be bettered.

"NO STRIKE WAS EVER LOST"--John Swinton

The present-day agitation for anti-strike laws and predictions of disaster to organized labor, recalls an address by John Swinton, journalist and author, before the A. F. of L. convention, held in Philadelphia, in December, 1892. A portion of the address follows:

"Now, my friends, I do not mean to raise any surprise here by saying that there is cause for congratulation in the somber history of the year 1892. The battalions that fought this year at Homestead in Pennsylvania, at Coeur d'Alene in Idaho, at the mines in Tennessee, at New Orleans in Louisiana, and also in the city of New York, rendered heroic, productive and memorable service to the industrial hosts of the United States—aye, they did. Honor them forever! Thrice honor to these brave men, who, by their courage, saved millions of their brethren from attack, and who prevented the enemy from ravaging other fields, which he surely would have ravaged if they had not taught him that his encroachments were both costly and dangerous to himself.

"'But,' cries some blear-eyed onlooker, 'labor was defeated in all these fields and fights, from Buffalo to Coeur d'Alene, from Homestead and New York to New Orleans.'

"Halt! I answer. Halt! Thou driveler! We must take a broad view of the warlike operations of which these strikes were incidents. Skirmishes may be lost. Regiments may be defeated in the battles of a triumphant campaign. Campaigns may end in dismay for the army that conquers in the war.

"Be not in haste, ye blear-eyed blockheads! This thing is not yet over. The forces of the advance have yet begun to learn their drill. Serious revolutions move in large arcs, along a course which is orderly, though it may appear to be zigzag. The war of the Union began at Bull Run, but closed elsewhere.

"I repeat, then, that the 50,000 brave men who, in the six great strikes and the many lesser strikes of this year, stood the enemy's onslaughts, rendered a service of incomputable worth to the working masses of the United States.

"If they had not thus stood out, if they had been cowed by dangers that confronted them, if they had succumbed without resistance, if they had failed to strike a blow before they fell—what do you think would have happened elsewhere? Do you doubt that cowardice would have invited further reprisals, that the conditions of labor would have been made harder in other places and other industries, that there would have been numberless attempts to reduce wages, to lengthen the working day, to crush out unionism, to deny the right of organization, to enforce conspiracy laws and to take all sorts of mean advantage of workers who were at the mercy of their employers?

"I tell you that those men who think that such exactions would not have been made by capitalists, if labor had refrained from giving evidence that it would resist them, must be numbskulls who cannot see the signs of the times.

"I ask you to bear it in mind, to hold it in grateful memory, that American labor in general has been benefited by the action of the brave strikers of Homestead, Buffalo, New Orleans, who took the field in its defense and fell while battling for a few of the items of its rights. The labor of this country has been paid millions of dollars this year, which it would not have got without the help of these striking brethren, which they would surely have lost if they had surrendered without a struggle, or had fought with less pluck and perseverance, or had failed to shiver the treasury of the assailant.

"Through them, many of you have been saved from the risks of the times; and how, then, can it be said that they strove in vain? Foul is the tongue of the workingman who would say it while reaping the advantage that they secured to him.

"I look for progress, if you be true to yourselves. I look for far brighter times, for far better industrial conditions, for a far worthier social order, for far greater general welfare than we now possess, if, with wisdom and courage, the working people wield the power which is now in their hands.

"Success to the American Federation of Labor!"

PETTY RETAIL PRICE REDUCTIONS IS LITTLE BENEFIT TO WORKERS

Washington, Nov. 27.—Small reductions in the price of single articles of food will have very little effect upon the cost of living to the average wage earner, Ethelbert Stewart, commissioner of labor statistics, said, in reply to inquiries as to the effect on the average family of price reductions that have taken place in the past three months.

"There was a drop of 1 cent in the price of a loaf of bread in New York the other day," said Mr. Stewart, "that is, the price fell from 10 cents to 9 cents per loaf. Now let us see what this much heralded reduction in the cost of living really means to the average worker with a family of five. On the basis of October, 1920, prices, the total annual cost of the food items carried by the bureau of labor statistics would be to an average family in the United States $682.57.

"If bread were to drop 1 cent a pound this would make a difference of $2.25 per year, or one-third of 1 per cent of the total food expenditure. When milk drops 1 cent a quart it means $3.55 per year to the average family, or 52-100 of 1 per cent. A drop of 1 cent a pound in the price of flour saves the average family but $4.54, or 77-100 of 1 per cent of its food cost, based on October prices. Sugar may fall 1 cent a pound and the average family saves $2.69 in a year, or 39-100 of 1 per cent of the total food cost. A decline of 1 cent a pound in the actual retail price of sirloin steak means but 70 cents a year to the average workman's family, though a similar reduction in pork chops would mean $1.14 a year, or 17-100 of 1 per cent.

"If butter ever should decline 1 cent a pound, the average workman would gain only to the extent of $1.17 per year.

"A drop of 1 cent a dozen in eggs would mean 85 cents a year; of 1 cent a pound on lard would mean 84 cents per year, in each case only 12-100 of 1 per cent. A drop of 1 cent a pound in bacon means 53 cents a year to the average family, or 8-100 of 1 per cent.

"For coffee to decline 1 cent a pound means 47 cents a year. In the case of rice it would mean 22 cents a year; tea, 11 cents a year; cheese, 16 cents a year, and the percentage of total cost of these things becomes almost too small for the human mind to grasp. To be sure, if potatoes dropped 1 cent a pound, which means 60 cents a bushel, the average workman would feel it to the extent of $8.82 a year, which after all is but 1 29-100 per cent of his total food costs."

"OPEN" SHOP DRIVE IS NON-UNION MASK

Washington, Nov. 27.—The "open" shop drive is a mask for non-unionism and is a menace not only to wage earners but threatens the whole structure of industrial peace, according to a statement by the social action department of the national Catholic welfare council.

"Of what avail is it for workers to be permitted by their employers to become members of unions, if the employers will not deal with unions?" is asked.

"The 'open' shop drive masks under such names as 'the American plan' and hides behind the pretense of American freedom. Yet its real purpose is to destroy all effective labor unions and thus subject the working people to the complete domination of the employers. Should it succeed in the measure that its proponents hope, it will thrust far into the ranks of the underpaid body of American working people.

"The unions were necessary even during the war, when working people found their labor in great demand. They are still more imperative now and they must keep their strength and grow. Otherwise we shall see a repetition of the old bad days when workers were utterly dependent upon their employers.

"There is great danger that the whole nation will be harmed by this campaign of a few groups of strong employers. To aim now at putting into greater subjection the workers in industry is blind and unworthy. The radical movements and disturbances in Europe ought to [illegible] a lesson for the employers of America. And the voice of the American people ought to be raised in the endeavor to drive this lesson home."

U. S. GOODS CHEAPER.

Washington, Nov. 27.—Just when certain employers are preparing to charge that high wages in this country make it impossible to compete with Europe, along comes a Frenchman and discredits the chant. The offender is J. A. M. de Sanchez of the French commission in the United States who writes on the opportunities for American goods in the French market. He says:

"A list of 27 articles were made [illegible] which are produced in England, Belgium, Italy and the United States and the comparative prices [illegible] f. o. b. Paris was obtained. It was found that the average prices of the American products were lower than those of Belgium and England for the same products, and only about 3 per cent higher than those of Italy. It was further found, with the exception of two [illegible] products, the quality of the American goods was at least 10 per cent higher than those of the other three countries."

PRICES AND WAGES IN '43.

[illegible], Tennessee, Nov. 27.—"An account book has been unearthed [illegible] prices paid by the owner of the book in 1843," says the San [illegible] Star.

"The figures given are such as to [illegible] weep for the 'good old [illegible]' until one stumbles on an item [illegible] the wages paid 77 years [illegible]. A pair of shoes is entered at [illegible] at 60 cents, a dozen [illegible] 7 cents, coffee at 10 cents a [illegible], butter at 8 cents, cheese at [illegible], lumber at 1 cent a foot and [illegible] at 10 cents each. These [illegible] days when a dollar was as [illegible] cart wheel in the matter [illegible]. But the sad awakening [illegible] when one reaches the [illegible] for one day's work. [illegible] Fifty cents today would [illegible] about 20 minutes' labor, [illegible] a 'day' probably meant [illegible] 14 hours."

THEY DON'T WANT MUCH.

[illegible], Ore., Nov. 27.—Cheap [illegible] employers in this state are [illegible] modest in their plans to [illegible] organized labor. All [illegible] is that the unions be in[illegible], that strikes be outlawed [illegible] that a state body be empowered [illegible] any agreement entered [illegible] between employers and a trade [illegible].

[illegible] these few changes the cheap [illegible] might be induced to [illegible] the workers to organize ping [illegible] parties and golf clubs.

CIGARETTE LAW UPHELD.

[illegible], Kan., Nov. 27.—The state [illegible] court upheld the law making [illegible] illegal to sell cigarettes in [illegible] that jails workers who [illegible] their employment. Every guar[illegible] of the workers is jubilant over [illegible] decision.

[illegible] law does not prohibit the use [illegible] cigarettes, but they cannot be [illegible]. Under the act it is legal to [illegible].

PAINTERS ORGANIZE.

[illegible], W. Va., Nov. 27.—Painters [illegible] this place have organized and affiliated with the trade union [illegible].

"LABOR WILL FIGHT."

Seattle, Nov. 27.—"Labor will fight" is the defi to reaction in this state by the executive council of the Washington state federation of labor. At a meeting in this city the executive council said anti-labor legislation will be attempted in Washington following the sweeping victory of reaction in the last election.

This prospect has not depressed the unionists, who call on organized labor to "set its house in order" for the coming battle.

"The fullest resistance," it is stated, "must be given to any attempt on the part of the legislature to any encroachment on labor's rights. If that fails, the initiative and referendum should be employed as well as legal action in the courts wherever that seems advisable. But above all, labor must start to build its political forces for a greater fight than ever two years hence—a fight that can be made sweepingly victorious if it profits by the mistakes made in the recent campaign.

"The message should go forth to the forces of reaction that labor's watchword for the next two years is Fight!"

DISPUTE OVER WORD

Philadelphia, Nov. 27.—For four hours miners and coal owners debated the meaning of the word "inequalities," as used by President Wilson in calling both parties together.

The recent anthracite coal award is unsatisfactory to the workers and caused unauthorized strikes that were opposed by the officers of the union. When the men returned to work President Wilson called a meeting of the miners and coal owners to "consider inequalities."

The parties have held several conferences but they can't agree on the meaning of the term "inequalities." The coal owners hold that the president means inequalities within the present agreement should be considered and the miners insist that the president intends that all inequalities in wages and working conditions should be adjusted.

The miners will place their case before the secretary of labor. They say that the present minimum of $4.20 a day is not sufficient to maintain a miner and family under present living conditions.

WISE MEN MADE BAD GUESS.

Washington, Nov. 27.—Wise men who pose as railroad authority made a bad guess in urging increased freight rates, which became effective last August. It was claimed by these oracles that higher rates would make it possible to pay 6 per cent to stockholders, as provided by the Cummins-Esch railroad bill.

It is now shown that during September, the first full month of high rates, the railroads fell $29,343,000, or 26.9 per cent, short of the amount of revenue expected of them. The roads should have a net income of $109,220,000.

These figures were made public by the bureau of railway economics and are based upon reports from 207 class 1 roads, having a total of 237,899 mileage.

The net railway operating income of the roads for September was $79,876,655, a gain of only 2.3 per cent over that for the same month in 1919, despite the increased rates.

WANT NON-UNION SHOP.

Nashville, Tenn., Nov. 27.—The Tennessee Manufacturers' association will hold a convention to establish the non-union shop. The calls states that "we want to say to you frankly that a serious situation confronts us at the next session of the legislature."

The manufacturers have in mind the defeat of Governor Roberts by organized labor at the last election. The bosses are alert to the effect of this unexpected defeat and plan to stiffen the backbone of their political agents.

The organized workers are preparing to meet the attack and declare the 'Roberts' medicine will be handed others.

UNIONISTS LOCKED OUT.

Middletown, Ohio, Nov. 27.—The Miami Cycle company posted a notice on Saturday that the plant would be closed "until further notice" because of industrial conditions. The following Monday the management notified its organized polishers that the plant would resume if they accepted a wage cut. These workers refused the offer and are using the incident to show why employers want the non-union shop.

MORE CONTRACT BREAKING.

Boston, Nov. 27.—Contract breaking by shoe merchants has become so general that the Boston Boot and Shoe club adopted resolutions in support of the "inviolability of contracts." Governor Coolidge told the club that contract breaking is a bad practice.

CHARITY SOCIETIES ARE NOT NECESSARY

New York, Nov. 27.—"Professional charities," backed by publicity agents and "sob stuff" were denounced by Commissioner Coler of the department of public welfare, who classified several well-known organizations among those who are attempting to do work that could be done more cheaply and effectively by the city. The commissioner excluded religious societies and private hospitals from his ban.

In referring to the numerous charity "drives" the commissioner said these drive leaders will work for any faith or any line of work, provided they get paid.

"This pay is on a straight salary, a lump sum or a commission basis," he said. "If a man is asked to give money in a drive he should be frankly told what proportion of it is going to the promoters.

"The state board of charities and local authorities together should control by permits the solicitation of all money for charitable purposes outside of religious organizations. I differentiate between the religious and the professional solicitor of money. If a church asks you for money you know what they are doing. If you want to do that you can, but I say when a corporation is asking for money it should prove its case.

"They build up organizations, elect themselves presidents and get some good names as directors or trustees. Many of these directors or trustees know as little of the organization as the old-time bank directors.

"They have attached themselves to a number of new-type professional money-getters who have grown into existence in the last two or three years. They tell sob stories and ask for contributions to some particular case and, receiving ten times the amount, keep it all."

RE-OPEN MOONEY CASE.

San Francisco, Nov. 27.—District Attorney Brady says he will reopen the Mooney case before the county grand jury. This announcement follows the charge by Detective Hand that he assisted in coaching witnesses in the trial of Mooney, who was convicted of being connected with the bomb throwing in this city in 1916.

The supreme court has refused to grant Mooney a new trial on the ground that perjury was used in his conviction. The court holds that it can only order a new trial if it is shown by the record of the case that irregular methods were used at Mooney's trial.

The perjury was not discovered until the record of the trial was closed. Mooney must now depend on a pardon by the governor. Other indictments are pending against Mooney and a new trial can be practically secured if the governor pardons him and he is then tried on another of the charges. Mooney and his friends have urged this course, but to date the governor has declined. The statement by Detective Hand, however, shatters the position of those who have opposed pardon, and sustains the claim that the entire proceedings were "framed."

SUGGEST LYNCH LAW.

Tampa, Fla., Nov. 27.—Infuriated by the solidarity of several thousand striking cigar makers, the Tampa Tribune prints this call for lynch law:

"The Tribune is not advancing any lynching bees, nor any deportation parties, but it declares the time is here for the people of this city to say to those responsible for the hungry mouths and poverty-pinched families of the greatest industry this city has, 'Get out!' and leave us and our people and our affairs alone."

The strike was caused by an attempt to destroy the cigar makers' unions. The first move was to discharge 200 committee men in the various shops. The workers failed to secure reinstatement of the victimized trade unionists and then suspended work.

The Tribune's policy is in line with the employers' plan of blaming trade union officials for the strike when the "agitators" and "trouble breeders" are the employers themselves.

COAL BUYERS GOUGED.

Philadelphia, Nov. 27.—Householders are overcharged from $2 to $4 a ton for their coal, declared William C. Kirk, former coal dealer in this city.

"I know the inner workings of the coal business, having been in it for many years," he said.

"Making due allowance for increased cost of mining and other expenses coal owners can well afford to sell their coal to dealers at $5.50 and $6 a ton. On that basis, adding the freight rate of $2.74, also $2.50 for gross profit for dealer to work on, retail prices should be at the most $11 a ton."

FANCY NAME FOR STRIKE.

Boston, Nov. 27.—It is stated that New England textile industries, employing 300,000 workers, have reduced their output one-half from the 1919 standard. Some mills have shut down and others are being operated on a 20 per cent basis. The bosses' strike is given the fancy title, "curtailment of production."

SAVING IMPOSSIBLE WITH PRESENT WAGES

Olympia, Wash., Nov. 27.—It is impossible for workers to save on present wages, says State Labor Commissioner Gram in his semi-annual report.

Fifty-eight per cent of the organized workers who replied to the query by the state official reported that they saved no money during 1918 and 1919, while 42 per cent reported an average saving of $259 for 1918 and $228 for 1919.

Forty-eight per cent owned their own homes or had contracts to purchase, while 52 per cent were renters, with an average rental of $16.58 a month for 1918, $19.88 a month for 1919 and $23.70 a month for 1920. Those who own their homes report an average property valuation of $2,436.

The unionists made the following suggestions to overcome the high cost of living: Legislation against profiteers, more wages, law requiring that all manufactured goods bear the price mark, give labor a voice and a share in industry.

Included in the commissioner's report is recommendations for remedial legislation. In urging inspection of boilers, attention is called to numerous explosions. The report states that Oregon is becoming a dumping ground for second hand boilers.

An urgent plea is made for the inspection of workshops in which women and children are employed and to compel observance of the laws applying to women and children.

BASIC WAGE FIASCO.

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, Nov. 27.—The board of trade has increased the basic wage of this state 8 shillings a week. The award means a wage increase of 10 per cent, but the board acknowledged that prices have advanced 18 per cent and the purchasing power of money has decreased at least 15 per cent since the last award.

The workers are enraged at the small advance and their anger is increased by the statement by President Brooks of the employers' federation that the increase will be passed on to the consumer.

This attempt to defeat the purpose of a basic wage causes the Australian Worker to ask: "Do the bosses want revolution?"

This publication has continually urged sanity and orderly progress by the workers and presents its protest as follows:

"'You are paying the workers 8 shillings a week less than they can live on,' says the board.

"'All right,' reply the bosses, 'we'll give them the 8 shillings and then we'll charge them 8 shillings more to live.'

"Where do the bosses think they are going? What do they imagine will be the outcome of their ceaseless efforts to foil a working class seeking to improve its conditions by lawful means?

"Let Mr. Brooks answer."

WORKERS MUST BE FREE.

New York, Nov. 27.—"It is idle to expect wage earners to be efficient citizens unless our industries are organized so that they may play an increasingly responsible part in determining the conditions under which they earn their living," writes Henry R. Seager, professor of political economy, Columbia university, in a local paper.

"Employers who give scope to the reasonable aspirations of their employes to have a voice through employe representation in controlling the conditions of employment are rendering an invaluable service to the whole community. They deserve to rank with our best teachers and most forward-looking statesmen. Employers, on the other hand, whose one thought in their relations how they can keep them down, thwart their legitimate desire to organize and reduce them to the situation of helpless dependents on the employers' bounty, are undesirable citizens, and should be recognized as such by all men."

ANSWERS DETRACTORS.

Charleston, W. Va., Nov. 27.—The kept press in this state is attempting to discredit officials of striking coal miners and C. F. Keeney, president miners' district No. 17, replies:

"As long as I can hear the howls of the jackals on my trail I know that I am going in the right direction."

The miners have been evicted from company houses and their household goods have been thrown on the public highways by armed guards and Baldwin-Feltz detectives. The union has secured tents and several thousand women and little children are faced with the rigors of winter while housed in this manner.

GIRL USHERS STRIKE.

Toledo, Ohio, Nov. 27.—Girl ushers employed by the Loew-Valentine theater went on strike against a 10-hour day and $12 a week. They claim that they were promised a large, round, shiny half dollar if they worked several hours extra on election day, but the silver has not been forthcoming.

The manager says the girls are mistaken and that each one of them was handed the 50-cent piece. He can't understand such forgetfulness. The girls are unorganized, of course.

IMMIGRANTS AIDED BY SHIP OFFICIALS

New York, Nov. 27.—Undesirable immigration is being stimulated by steamship officials and officials of European countries, who are shipping their most vicious elements to this country, declared Commissioner of Immigration Wallis in an address before the national industrial council. The council is a federation of manufacturers' associations.

The federal official's statements were most sensational. He said a world-wide conspiracy exists between officials of foreign countries and certain steamship officials to unload criminals and revolutionists in this port. The public officials want to get rid of these elements and the ship companies are interested in profits. The immigration commissioner said one ship arrived here with 1,100 immigrants listed as the ship's crew. These men quickly abandoned the ship when it was docked. The speaker estimated that in the next six years over 10,000,000 immigrants will come from Germany, Italy and Holland alone.

"We have traced this world-wide conspiracy very near to its point of origin," he said. "We now know that having failed to put through many of their undesirables by the usual immigration routes, the shippers of this human freight of anarchy have turned to the stowaway method. Recently the Panama, from Mexico, had 16 stowaways; a steamship from Chile, 18; a steamship from Naples, 42, and a vessel from Constantinople, 16.

"Unless we restrict and unless we better the lot of those we accept—for an anarchist can be made in one day at Ellis island—there will be terror and widespread crime in all our larger cities in the very near future."

CALLS 'EM PLUNDERERS.

Philadelphia, Nov. 27.—Fair Price Commissioner McClain used harsh terms in discussing the low price of beef cattle and the high price of meat charged by retailers. The official called the retailers "plunderers," but the profiteers continue raking in the shekels.

It was shown that the price of beef cattle, except prime choice, is down to the 1915 level, with a glutted market.

Mr. McClain also expressed surprise that the price of shoes and other commodities made from leather have not been reduced, as hide prices have reached a low level that has not been equalled since 1909.

"Investigation has disclosed," he said, "that a great many retail venders of essential commodities, such as wearing apparel and footwear, are trying to maintain nearly the peak prices of October and November a year ago, no doubt hoping that they can bluff the thing through and unload their high cost stuff on the public at a profit, or at best, at no loss.

"This is a vain hope on their part. The tide is running strong in the opposite direction. The people have gotten over their orgy of spending and the class of merchants to whom I refer might as well face the inevitable. The day for settlement has arrived, and normal conditions, which mean stabilized prices on a new basis, cannot be had until liquidation of old stocks has been completed."

PANAMA CANAL PAYS.

Washington, Nov. 27.—The Panama canal closed its last fiscal year with an excess of $2,237,599 in revenue over operation and maintenance.

In his annual report, just made public, Brigadier General Harding, governor of the canal, predicted that within a reasonable period of normal world conditions the big waterway will earn an actual profit on its cost, which has been $366,650,000, exclusive of expenditures for military purposes.

If the government assigned the building and operation of this public utility to a private corporation, there would be about one billion dollars of bonds issued and twice that amount of stock, with charges on vessels going through the canal sufficient to pay interest on this vast amount of water.

MAHLON M. GARLAND DEAD.

Washington, Nov. 27.—Congressman Garland of Pennsylvania died suddenly in his residence in this city. Deceased served as president of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers for several years. He was fourth vice president of the A. F. of L. in 1895, 1896 and 1897. He represented Pennsylvania as congressman-at-large during the last two sessions of congress, and the present session, and was re-elected at the November elections. His home was in Pittsburg.

"SHOES SHOULD COME DOWN."

Philadelphia, Nov. 27.—"Shoes should come down," writes Richard Spillane in the financial column of the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

"The greatest leather company in America is reported to have purchased 400,000 hides at prices ranging from 12 to 16 cents a pound. Last year hides of the same grade cost nearly 60 cents a pound. Hides now are selling on a pre-war basis. In fact, they are a little below it."

"CAN'T-STRIKE" LAW GENTLE WITH BOSSES

Topeka, Kan., Nov. 27.—The Kansas court of industrial relations investigated several millers who have reduced production. Under Governor Allen's "can't-strike" law the court has this power.

The event was delightful, although somewhat in contrast to the court's determination to enforce the law when it jails striking workers.

The millers were first notified that the hearing was not in the nature of a trial and that they would not have to testify under oath. The presiding judge wanted it understood that no penalty would be imposed. One of the millers declared that "I will do anything to make a little money." Another stated that only unskilled workers were affected by the shutdowns. It would appear that unskilled employes don't have to eat. This testimony lost its value, however, when it was shown that practically all of the employes are classed as "unskilled."

With a great flourish of fairness the court asked if any employe desired to be heard, but echo answered no—the millers recently smashed the Cereal and Flour Mill Workers' union.

After the hearing the court announced that it "had heard nothing during the day that indicates a willful violation of the law."

A local paper quoted a "labor man" (name not stated) that this was the first time the law was applied to "capital" (meaning capitalists) and workers.

When Governor Allen makes his next international tour in favor of "can't-strike" laws, he will tell how the Topeka millers were rounded up by this act, which makes no difference between capitalists and workers.

STILL LOOKING BACKWARD.

New York, Nov. 27.—William H. Barr, president of the National Founders' association, persists in looking backward. In addressing the annual convention of his organization he declared for the non-union shop, opposed the literacy test provision of the immigration law and denounced the federal contract labor law. He said the literacy test keeps out unskilled labor "which this country needs so badly."

The purpose of the contract labor law is to stop employers of the William H. Barr kind from contracting with laborers in foreign countries to come here and work for low wages. This is Mr. Barr's interpretation of the act:

"We are forbidden to give any immigrant correct information concerning opportunities of placement, so that when he comes here he cannot be routed to the districts where he is most needed."

The speaker made it clear that things should be so arranged that when a strike exists immigrants could be shipped where they are "most needed."

Mr. Barr called on the revolutionary fathers to indorse his non-union shop views.

JUDGE FAVORS CAUTION.

Detroit, Mich., Nov. 27.—Circuit Court Judge Hunt does not favor using the injunction writ indiscriminately and has refused to issue one of these orders on "suspicion."

Employing barbers ask for an injunction against the Barbers' union and the court said:

"There must be an allegation of personal knowledge of the fact, or in the absence of that, certain other proof must be shown from which it must be a compelling inference that such fact exists."

The court gives notice that if employers want him to usurp the functions of the law making body and sentence workers to jail without a trial by jury, they must present something tangible.

Ex-Federal Judge Taft has taken this position on numerous occasions. He insists that the indiscriminate use of the labor injunction destroys its usefulness.

"ENFORCING" THE LAW.

Chicago, Nov. 27.—The Chicago Daily News is gleeful because the Kansas court of industrial relations has cited several millers to show why they have lessened production. The editor predicts that the court will have hard work to apply the law against the millers, but this is mere detail—the millers have been cited to show cause.

So why, asks this wondering editor, do labor "leaders" insist that this legislation is only used against the workers?

Doesn't the court call on business men to explain why they shut down their plants, and doesn't the court jail striking workers?

CALL FOR PRODUCTION.

Cincinnati, Nov. 27.—"We now demand," says Editor Atherton of the Metal Polishers' Journal, "that the manufacturers remove the limit and cease restricting the output in order to maintain their exorbitant prices."

AUTO PAINTERS UNITE.

Portland, Ore., Nov. 27.—The recently organized union of automobile painters reports nearly a 100 per cent membership. The larger auto shops are signing the agreement of this local.

"A MISMANAGED INDUSTRY."

New York, Nov. 27.—Scranton, the heart of anthracite coal lands, but 100 miles from this city, is linked with tidewater by a maze of tracks and but for the greed of the railroads in destroying water competition to erect a monopoly that is not competently conducted, it might be served also by up-to-date canals, says the New York World.

"A Mismanaged Industry" is this paper's reference to the present situation. To dig coal and haul it 100 miles "is bungled in almost every conceivable way."

"Profits grew also by delayed deliveries. The best coal storage is in cellars. It was impossible to fill bins in April at $11 and $12 a ton; the rise to $14 and $15, with many sales at higher rates, suggests ugly possibilities of profit in having the trade badly handled. A sudden and severe cold spell finds thousands of people who cannot get coal at any price.

"A meeting of coal wholesalers was held yesterday in New York to consider questions of selling profits. Very interesting to the trade, no doubt, is the limitation of wholesalers' profits, though these percentages alone take one-third of the cost of coal years ago to the consumer—but more interesting to a public dependent upon artificial heat would be the businesslike reorganization of a mismanaged industry."

TEACHERS AND JAIL BIRDS.

Philadelphia, Nov. 27.—In urging higher wage rates for public school teachers, the Philadelphia North American presents this comparison:

"The people of Tennessee pay their sheriffs 75 cents a day for feeding each inmate of a county jail, a total of $274 a year. Besides this, these prisoners get free lodging, light, heat and water and free medical and religious attention. They are not even asked to contribute to foreign missions. All told, each of them costs far more than the figure quoted for food, but for our present purpose that will suffice.

"The country school teachers in Tennessee, who are chosen to train a majority of the children of that state to be useful, intelligent citizens, receive an average annual salary of $258, according to the latest official figures. In addition to paying for their food, this sum must cover clothing, shelter, light, heat, water and medical attention, and they are expected to contribute their share to church support.

"So the people of Tennessee pay $16 a year more for the food of a prisoner than for the entire support of a rural school teacher."

MATERNITY INSURANCE.

Washington, Nov. 27.—For the protection of maternity and infancy last year the British ministry of health appropriated more than $2,500,000, according to the United States children's bureau.

The funds are administered by the ministry of health, in co-operation with local authorities. The latter contribute a sum equal to that granted by the government. In commenting upon this work, Dr. Addison, British minister of health, says:

"The development of the services throughout the country in nursing, midwifery and other facilities, and the combination of the whole big effort, has been able to reduce the [illegible] in 20 years from 151 to 78. If we had had that figure of 78 during the last 20 years it would have meant the saving of 250,000 lives in that period."

JAIL HAS NO TERRORS.

Washington, Nov. 27.—"Show that you have the moral courage to go to jail, if necessary," said President Barrett to members of the Farmers' Educational and Co-Operative Union of America.

The farmers' executive made this appeal in connection with the movement to hold products for higher prices. It is claimed that federal agents are collecting evidence to use against the farmers.

Efforts of the farmers toward co-operation, Mr. Barrett said, has met with strong opposition from the first. He charged that efforts have been made to prevent the farmers from buying collectively.

"PARTY IDIOTS" RAPPED.

Washington, Nov. 27.—"Party idiots" is the scorching term applied to political partisans by former United States Senator J. Hamilton Lewis of Illinois. The ex-law maker declared that the national committees of the two major parties should be abolished.

"They have served their usefulness and are at an end," he said. "At present these committees in presidential campaigns are regarded as political collection brigands or as traders of administration favors for corporation funds. The system should end."

POLISHERS RAISE WAGES.

Westfield, Mass., Nov. 27.—Metal polishers and buffers employed by the Westfield Manufacturing company have raised wages to 90 cents an hour. The old rate was 72½ cents.

ONE-MAN CONTRACTS URGED IN AUSTRALIA

Melbourne, Australia, Nov. 27.—Parliament has amended the Australian conciliation and arbitration law by legalizing individual contracts with employers and members of organized labor.

Arbitration in the Australian commonwealth has been based on organization between employers and employes. Trade unionism is recognized that awards may prove effective and many awards provide that preference be given trade unionists by employers.

The workers now ask what will happen to arbitration courts when their awards run counter to agreements made by employers and individual workers.

The amendment is declared to be an attack on the powerful Australian Workers' union, which recently established a 44-hour week and improved working conditions in the pastoral industry. It is claimed that the amendment was prepared some time ago by Chief Justice Mox, who was then counsel for the Graziers' association.

Trade unionists say the amendment will weaken the workers' faith in the federal arbitration court and they connect its passage with the retirement of Justice Higgins as president of the Australian court of conciliation and arbitration. He has been succeeded by an avowed cheap-labor advocate.

In opposing the amendment Arthur Blakely, member of parliament and president of the Australian Workers' union, stated that he would not recommend that that union remain registered under the arbitration act.

"We are prepared to get out," he said, "and discard the arbitration court altogether, depending upon conferences or direct action to protect our members."

HOW LABOR NEWS IS PRINTED.

Washington, Nov. 27.—A short time ago press dispatches stated that Baltimore building trade unionists declined a wage increase because of "decreased" living costs. The story was given wide circulation.

William J. Spencer, secretary of the building trades department A. F. of L., asked John B. Thomas, secretary of the Baltimore building trades council, for the facts in this case and received the following reply:

"Carpenters and Joiners' union No. 101 some time ago gave their employers notice that on and after November 1, 1920, the rate of wages would be $1 an hour instead of 90 cents. On Sunday, November 7, they held a special meeting and decided not to press the claim for an increase, but to continue to work at the old rate.

"In giving the news to the reporter I presume that they stated that the carpenters were connected with the building trades council, and that individual used the name of the council instead of the carpenters, hence all the confusion."

LOW FEDERAL WAGE.

Washington, Nov. 27.—"With its present scale of wages the government is unable to compete successfully with the commercial world," said Adjutant General Harris in his annual report.

The army official insists that the government cannot expect to retain its best employes indefinitely, because, in justice to themselves and their families, they must accept the larger opportunities offered to them outside the federal service, unless the government decides to readjust salaries.

Because of low wages the adjutant general's office is merely a training school for employes, who leave when they acquire experience. This labor turnover is most costly to the government and could be avoided by raising wages and at the same time securing better service for money expended.

TO START LABOR PAPER.

Seattle, Nov. 27.—The Washington state federation of labor will establish a weekly labor paper in the near future. The recent political campaign has removed every doubt on the need for additional education and publicity by organized labor.

Officials of the state federation of labor state that they will co-operate with existing labor papers, and as the field is a wide one, there will be no competition except in the sense of rivalry to develop stronger publications.

BIG LINOTYPE PROFITS.

New York, Nov. 27.—The report of the Mergenthaler Linotype company for the last fiscal year shows net profits of $2,420,721. This is equivalent to $11.88 a share on the $11,000,000 capital stock, as against $12.76 a share the preceding year.

TAILORS REORGANIZE.

Dayton, Ohio, Nov. 27.—A local of the Journeymen Tailors' Union of America has been formed here. These workers allowed a former local to lapse some time ago.